

Episode Transcript – How to Run a Successful Commission Salon in 2025 (Part 1)

Foundations First: Mission, Vision, and Values [00:00]

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Todd: All right. Welcome back everyone. Happy Monday. Hello, Jennifer. Good morning.

Jen: Hello. Good morning.

Todd: It's not Monday. It

Jen: Nope,

Todd: weird saying that.

Jen: it's not. But if you're listening on a Monday, happy Monday, another day. Happy day.

Todd: that's when, these episodes release on Monday. So I'm just in the habit of saying Happy Monday. Anyway, let's get to it. So Jen and I have been noticing a lot of. Salon owners and whoever, just things get shaken up and things get shaken up all the time. But I see a lot of people that are like, running a commission salon worth it? Everyone's going rental. I see that a lot. I also see I'm over renters. I wanna work by myself a lot.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: I also see I'm over renting. I want to be back with commission so that I can be around a team again. [00:01:00] I

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm.

Todd: So today we're gonna talk about the things that we do in our commission salon, I hope it helps people out there. I can't talk to owning a rental salon, but I can talk to owning a business. So. I guess for today, we'll just stick with what we're doing and what's working because that there is value in everything and you just have to understand that as a leader or a business owner, you have to operate the business and not just the hair. I guess, what, I'm gonna jump in with my opening

Jen: Okay.

Todd: really close to that, if you don't

Jen: No.

Todd: time for opening takes. I still need to

Jen: Yes, you do. Get on that.

Todd: for that. Um, so today my opening take is that running a salon business isn't about scissors. It's not about your chair.

It's not about what blow dryer you use. It's about business. It's about [00:02:00] understanding and building business. That is number one problem I think the industry faces on our end. you want to talk about the product side of stuff and the brands and all that, there's a ton of BS there too. But for today, let's control what we can control and what we can control is our business. You have to, if you want a business, down the scissors, step away from the chair and build a

Jen: Mm-hmm. And run it.

Todd: And so we're gonna talk about exactly what we did to accomplish that today after Jen's take. Probably gonna, I'm probably just gonna record that and put like a

Jen: Okay. I like it. Um, so my opening take is leadership. So. To what you said in the beginning, I, I see often, um, just complaining. Like, does anyone, like, how are you even hiring people? How are you keeping people, everyone's leaving. Um, I see a lot of blaming on the hair pros that are coming [00:03:00] outta school. Let's say next generation hair pros.

Like they don't wanna work. They're lazy. Okay? So first of all, that's the next generation. So figure out how to inspire them. That would be leadership. And if you're having all these problems rather than blame generation of. The next hair pros or anything else under the the roof. Of the business you're running, you gotta take a look in the mirror because it starts at the top.

So you are leading either a team, a business, whatever you're leading, it's on you to start there. And most often you are the problem of where it all began. So take a look in the mirror. Um, reevaluate. Probably change some stuff or read a few books on how to lead a team and how to inspire people, how to understand the next generation that's coming into the hair industry.

'cause if you understand them, you can figure out how to lead them. Don't just blame everything that you see that's not working. In my day, it was this, in my day it was that I've been doing hair for 25 years. I get it in my day. I did this. But that's not the team that we [00:04:00] lead at. Hello? They need different things.

They don't need what I did. They're not me. And that's totally fine. I need, and Todd needs to understand how to lead this team in this generation in 2025 and how to get them excited. That's on us and we do a lot of work to do that. So check your leadership.

Todd: All right. Amen. So just roll into this. Everything is gonna start with your

Jen: I.

Todd: And what I mean by that is not this like, woo woo,, let's clear our minds. Let's do all this stuff. No, let's wrap your mind around. You're building a freaking business and that's what you need to do. I. You could be amazing at cutting hair, coloring, teaching, educating, whatever.

You could be a, a global platform artist. Is that the highest? What's the

Jen: I don't know. Sure.

Todd: what's the highest BS rank that we made up

Jen: I don't pay attention like on that side.

Todd: you could be the best, um, at whatever you're doing and suck at running a business.

Jen: Uhhuh.

Todd: I'm not even sorry to say that. It's just facts. You could also be amazing at running a business and have no clue how to do [00:05:00] hair. Sorry. It's true. There are people out there running better salons that don't even know how to do

Jen: Right.

Todd: and so you have to wrap your mind around that, first and foremost. it's not gonna work because you're gonna do all the things that Jen is saying. You're gonna be like blaming other

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: which is counterproductive because

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: your fault. You own the

Jen: Right.

Todd: or you're going to be just completely shutting down. Which is gonna lead you to burnout. 'cause we, how many people do Jen that just bury their head in the sand and they're like, I'll just work as hard as I can. And eventually something magical will

Jen: Right. That's,

Todd: they're burnt out and they're like, I wanna leave the

Jen: that's a fantasy world that's not real.

Todd: Yeah. You, you, your, I guess I can say this, your ex-business partner used to just bury your head in the sand and pretend everything would be okay and things would stack up. And stack up and stack up. And

Jen: Correct.

Todd: Now you guys aren't business

Jen: Yeah, very true. I.

Todd: It's just [00:06:00] not a good

Jen: I think when you don't know what to do, for some reason you're like, if I keep doing the same thing, but more of it, um, things will change, right? Like something's gotta give, and the give is whoever's.

Todd: leaving.

Jen: Running the business to run it better and, and try something new. Not do the same thing over and over and more of it.

If it's not working, it's not working. Like you have to reflect on that. Then you gotta figure out why it's not working and then what's the solution to fix that, to try something different that may or may not work also, but you've got to do something different.

Todd: Agreed, so. Yeah, that's another really, really important point is to try new stuff. So we, how many times do you see somebody going, what promotions work? We need to get people in, I need clients, what promotions work? And then they're running promotions and they're like 20% off, 40% off, 80% off. Buy one, get one

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Like I,

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: not a sustainable business model to give away your product when you need sales is not. [00:07:00] Intelligent. It's not a good play. And it just shows me that people that do that don't understand business. If you aren't profitable, you can't afford to give away

Jen: Correct.

Todd: I don't. So you are there way, are there workarounds and things like, can you have a distributor help you out with some product and do giveaways?

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: But what I'm seeing is people that are doing. Massive gift card promotions. Buy a \$50 gift card, get a \$50

Jen: You're not a corporation. No way. So, and I, on promotions, the only only thing I would say for me, I would cosign on a promotion is say you are phasing out a service or you're phasing out a product line and you're like, I need to move this product, or I want to use the rest of the bottle of this product for this service.

Cool. Promote it in a way that you're getting rid of it to open it up for something else That makes more sense to me. Um, but the gift card one blows my mind. 'cause you're just. Losing money. Um, and more often other ones where you're trying to build somebody but you're [00:08:00] promoting with discounts, they're attracting a clientele that's not gonna stay.

Um, and it's counterproductive, in my opinion.

Todd: Yeah, when you do discounts, and trust me, I learned from making these mistakes. I, I'm not perfect. I'm not the best business owner in the world. I've owned businesses now for the past, like what? We're almost on 16 years or 15 and a half or whatever we're at

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: so I. I've learned from trial and error, and the reason I'm passionate about helping people is because I've made a lot of

Jen: Yeah, don't,

Todd: can help

Jen: right?

Todd: make those mistakes. So what happens when you run all these heavy discounts is you get these transient discount chasing coupon chasing people artificially inflate things in your business. And then guess what they do? They go to

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: when that salon runs a

Jen: Right.

Todd: because they're transient. chasing people.

There's nothing wrong with them. They're really nice people, but that's their thing. So now what do you have to do? You [00:09:00] have to do more discounts to chase more people. And now you're in this spinning, this hamster wheel where you're offering 20% off constantly. So you're running at 80%, uh, of possibility, like 80% is the highest possible you could ever make. You're splitting, you're giving 50% of that to someone. You're paying taxes on all that stuff you're negative, you're never gonna catch up

Jen: Uh, yeah. If you're in the promotion business, meaning you're running a promotion, I would say you have to map out your whole entire year of what promotions are you running every month to keep getting in those people who are looking for deals. And if you're like, oh, that sounds awful, then you shouldn't run any promotions like that.

Like those discounts don't make sense to me, but I. If you're like, that's how you're building, then you should have a marketing strategy for your whole entire year of all of the ways that you're gonna keep doing that consistently so that you can keep those people coming in for whatever discounts you're giving out.

But then you also have to look at your numbers and are you actually even making money off of that? 'cause if you're not, then why are you doing it? Just to have people [00:10:00] sitting in your chair and make it look like it's busy, even though you're losing money, that that doesn't make sense.

Todd: Right. So I want to touch on marketing 'cause I think it's a key component. But before that, I think it's important to start where we began with our foundations Jen and I huge into foundations. And what does that mean? What does foundations, whatcha guys talking about? We're talking about your mission statement, your vision statement, and your core principles or core values. And I'll explain them each real quick. If you're not sure. Mission statement is why you exist. Why does your business exist? Who do you serve? What do you do? Why do you do it? can people expect? It's important to have that laid out. And we had an exercise that we ran through several actually, to figure out our mission statement. Our vision statement, or a vision statement in general is where you'll be in the future. What do you want your business to be in the future and look like? What impact do you want to have on your community, on your industry, on your clientele, on [00:11:00] your employees, that's your vision statement and your core values or principles, whatever you want to call them.

I kind of go back and forth on

Jen: I like values, but.

Todd: Yeah, so your core values are the things that are important to you, and these shouldn't be just things that you put on your wall because you're like. You know, you think that it's what you should have up there. Shouldn't write the word luxury and be like, we're luxury because you think it's what a salon should be. Instead, it should be the values, the things that are important to you in your soul, the things that you will not stray from, I guess things that you are not willing to negotiate. And so for us, it was easy to put that list together and then we narrowed it down. That was the tough part. And then we operate our business from those values, period. So if something doesn't fit our core [00:12:00] values, like Jen might come to me with something, she's like, I have this idea.

And I'm like, okay, how does it fit our core values? How does it support our mission? How does it land us on our vision? if it's, it doesn't. Then we don't make that move. it's not me saying no, it's because we're business partners and we're running a business. Now, if we just ran it from the side of doing hair, would have every product line. We would have a million different logos, we would have a million

Jen: Oh,

Todd: just

Jen: chaos.

Todd: and things. Yeah, it would just be chaos. And now how many salons do that?

Jen: Oh, so many. They give me a headache.

Todd: they don't have a baseline. If you don't have a starting point, if you don't have a long, um, a jump point for your business, you really got nothing.

So you have you, the good news is it's your business, so you can go back now and do that

Jen: Yeah.

Leadership Starts at the Top [08:00]

Todd: and you have a team already, will it upset them maybe. But that's the price that it costs to play.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: And you can work around that stuff too. If you're a strong enough leader, you can get people to [00:13:00] buy in and if people don't buy in,

Jen: Find your new people.

Todd: Yeah. Find your new

Jen: Um, I just wanna, on this point, this exercise was really, now remember I did own a salon before and we had a, a mission ish statement. I do remember going through the exercise, but it was kind of there just to basically like what Todd was saying, like put something out there. So we looked like a business, but we didn't ever refer to it or use it to drive the business.

So when we were coming up with the concept for Hello and we're running through all of these, um. Different exercises to get the, the mission, the core values, um, the vision for the, the company. Uh, what I started to look at was now anything else that we aligned with. I now wanted to know what was that company's mission statement?

What do they stand for, what's their vision? Um, and I'd never done that before. So more so I guess with different brands that we were bringing in. Like I wanted to understand the backstory of those brands. Do they align not just from some of the stuff that Todd one I wanted was like simplicity and packaging and that kind of [00:14:00] stuff.

But like, did they stand for things that worked for what we were doing and did it work for like what Hello was trying to create? Um, and that even came into switching some behind. The scenes products we were using for different services that I realized weren't as clean or didn't stand up as well as I thought they had.

So it was very interesting as we were creating. For our business that I, now, when anything comes on our plate, it's, those are the things I look at first to make sure it's even worth bringing to the table to have a discussion. And I had never really looked at it that way. And I find it very interesting.

And as you look at other companies to, to learn about them and see what they stand for and make sure if you're bringing them in or you're endorsing them into your business, that it truly is something that works for what you guys are doing.

Todd: I couldn't agree more. What I'll add too is find yourself a distributor and a rep that understands your business and what you're doing. Because if you don't, their job is to sell products. They're gonna bring you a bunch of stuff that doesn't

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: align with you, but it's [00:15:00] fun and it's new

Jen: And before it, you're just like, sure, why not?

Todd: and, JLo or somebody endorsed it.

Jen: It must be cool.

Todd: must, you're gonna make a million dollars if you bring this in. here's the deal. We have an amazing distributor partner that they understand what we're doing. So if they bring us something, we

don't have to go. Is this even worth looking

Jen: Right.

Todd: I mean, sometimes stuff might slip through.

Maybe they get excited, but the most part. They're, what, what we looked for was somebody that was very mission driven and they are very mission driven. They're very family oriented, they're very pro taking care of their employees. They're very respectful of time, and so those are the things that we aligned with.

And so chose them exclusively to work with Hello. that reason, it buys us peace of mind

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and we know we have the support, actual support. They are more of a boutique, I would

Jen: Yeah. Mm-hmm.[00:16:00]

Todd: They're not a massive integrated company, but they have the power to help us when we need

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: when we have questions and they offer a lot. They're always helping us out and helping other people in their network. So it's worth it to look around and find. Everything that aligns with your business, and those aren't things you would necessarily think about. Starting out, you're thinking about, how can I hire a stylist? How can I Im, how can I make them sell more retail? How can I get clients to stay? That's what you're thinking of. These are the things that will drive that. These are the big, hard questions that you have to figure out as a business owner or as a leader. If you are not willing to do that, you shouldn't really have a business. And I'm sorry to say that 'cause it sounds like a jerk thing to say, but it's the truth. You're going to fail if you don't put the work in. And we don't wanna see people fail.

Jen: Right.

Todd: I think more people in the industry,, for a while you would see always this [00:17:00] like, uh, no competition thing or whatever the hell it was. like competition. I, if you have competition, it pushes you to be

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: you to do.

Jen: that's how you innovate. That's how you get inspired.

Todd: It doesn't mean I want anyone to do bad. It doesn't mean

Jen: The word competition is a healthy word. I don't know why people make it sound like it's a bad word. It's really quite fantastic.

Todd: because they're afraid of it.

Jen: Yeah, I, I'm a competitive person, so it makes me so excited.

Todd: they think with a scarcity mindset, if someone else does, well, I do bad, but that's not how the

Jen: No, not even close.

Todd: So rising tide lifts all ships. If there's a vibe in your community of just having great salons, why would that be bad for you? That means you're a great salon. Geez.

Jen: Celebrate.

Todd: Yeah. the people, everyone around you is

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Isn't that what you

Jen: Which means you'll just keep pushing to be better and better and better.

Todd: Yes. [00:18:00] I want to touch on marketing. I think we brought that up and I don't remember exactly what you said about it, but you said something about marketing. Do you remember what you said?

Jen: Mm-hmm. Surprise, surprise.

Todd: so I, I wanted to come back to it after we talked about the, the mission and vision. Because your marketing needs to reflect those things, website should display your mission. should not just be a pretty logo and how to contact you. It needs to tell your

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Your website needs to give the vibe of your salon accurately.

Jen: So important and so often not what we see.

Todd: Yeah, exactly. How many times have you looked at someone's website and then gone to teach at their salon and

Jen: They're com

Todd: doesn't look anything

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: that?

Jen: like website could be beautiful. And then I walk in there and it's like complete chaos and not clean and just, yeah, complete opposite. And it, if [00:19:00] that's your vibe, then make sure your website is the same thing, so that not just me, I mean, I'm not coming in there just to talk about product.

But, um, from a clientele perspective, you wanna make sure that that person isn't disappointed. You wanna wow them when they walk in. Your salon should be even better than what's displayed on your website.

Todd: I agree wholeheartedly with that. And so with marketing, you have. Have to understand yourself. So that's your mission, vision, core values, because you're telling those stories. Now, who are you telling them to? And keep in mind, these are all 100% things we've done at Hello that have worked. I'm not giving you anything that's theory.

I'm not giving you anything that we're guessing at. is 100% stuff that we've done. And so the next step is who are you talking to? So you have to create an avatar. You have to understand, if you don't know what that means, I'll put some links in

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the show notes. I've written blog posts about it, which is another part of your marketing. But you don't understand who you are and [00:20:00] you don't understand who you're talking to, how are you marketing? You're not, you're just throwing dollars out to like boost

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That's not marketing,

Jen: no return on investment there, so you're wasting your money and you think you're probably doing something. You're like, oh, I'm getting out to people. You're not because you're lost and you, you don't have a clear vision of who, literally, you said, like what Todd said, who you're marketing to, who are you targeting?

Todd: I've had people that I've worked with in the past, Jen, that are, that have said,, I boosted this post and it got 1200 likes. And I said, great. How many dollars did you make off of that? And they were like, huh?

Jen: That's where I think people get really confused with the,

Todd: hold on, hold on

Jen: yeah.

Todd: The second part of it is go through those likes. 75% of 'em are your friends from hair school that does nothing for you. You're not talking to them. They already know you do hair. Why are you marketing to people that already know you exist? Go ahead. Sorry.

Jen: I think that's a actually great point. What I was gonna like, just the likes part. I think [00:21:00] there's this social media. Buzz inside of people that are like, I, like you just said, I got 1200 likes. Like, oh my God, that's so amazing. So you feel really great, but how much money did you pay to boost the post? So you need to make Mac at least that.

Plus you should be making a ton more on top of it so that it's worth it to boost these posts, those likes, if they don't bring in any dollars. Are useless. So great. You got a confidence boost, but the marketing is supposed to make you money, not just make you feel great. So like what you said, then you get all these likes, and if more majority of them are either bots or your friends and they're not coming in to sit in your chair, then that's not working for you and that's not marketing.

Keep doing it If you feel good, but you should be making money off your marketing strategies.

Todd: A lot of times too, I've heard this, uh,, I'm not in this for the money. This is my passion. You guys talk about money a lot. I've heard people say that too. You know, Todd and Jen talk about money a lot. I've heard that through the grapevine. Yeah. You know [00:22:00] why? money solves problems.

Jen: keeps your business open.

Todd: 'cause if you want to take care of your employees so they stay, you need money to do that.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you wanna, uh, surprise and delight your clients by giving away free services or by just surpri, by saying, what, today your blow dries on me. You're a great client and I love you when I see you in my chair. Today's on me. If you wanna be able to do that stuff right and not just discount to try to get clients in, need money to do that. You have to cover that, that cost there, especially if you have somebody else, like take care of people's services sometimes that whatever, we just decide that we're taking care of the service. I still have to pay the service provider,

Jen: That takes money.

Todd: have to have the money beforehand to do that because we want to be in a position to give back to

Jen: Yeah. And we wanna be open year after year after year so that we can keep doing these things and have a salon [00:23:00] for people to work at that want to be in a great environment that takes money.

Todd: talk,

Jen: I.

Todd: know, about the economy. 'cause everyone online's an economist and they talk about inflation because everyone understands what that actually means. And the thing is you have to build that stuff in. So you have to make more money every

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: If you look at our business we've made, except for when, so when we opened, it was COVID.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That whole thing screwed everything up. So we went from zero to,, I forget what the numbers are, but it was like thousands of percents better. And then we had a little bit of a dip because things

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So if you take, if you take that out, have beaten every month, every year since then. And that's what you have to do to keep up with inflation, to keep up with things, is you have to continually increase your sales. Continually chase that bottom line. you have the top line where all the money comes into your business, it goes out, [00:24:00] right? You need to pay your electricity, your rent, your water, your supplies, your loans, your whatever, your employees, your taxes, and then you have the bottom line, and it's all the dollars that you could save for yourself. And then guess what? you can decide what to do with. Those are yours. You can give those away. You can't give away money before you

Jen: Right.

Todd: So you gotta flip your thinking there. Um, let's get a little, so I've, I've decided halfway through this that this was gonna be a two part episode. It just needs to be, it needs to be. So where do you wanna go next with things that we've done at, hello? We've talked about our foundations. We've talked about marketing, we've talked about money a little bit. [00:25:00] Culture.

Jen: Sure that goes into that leadership that I started with, so I like that we can finish up with that.

Todd: yeah, I think, I don't think we're gonna finish on that. I think we're gonna probably talk a little bit about it and then we'll pick back up with culture next week because it's just a huge thing. So where do you want to even start? I think. I asked you where you wanna start, and then I had an

Jen: Go ahead. That was great. I paused too. I'm proud of myself.

Todd: So I, I just think it all goes back to your mindset and knowing who you are and your foundations. If you, I see this problem all the time where people are like, I can't find renters, I can't find commission stylists. I can't find anyone to fill my suites. Are there any other options out there I'm not aware of?

Jen: No, that's, I think that's pretty much it.

Todd: So here's the thing, if you don't know who you are, how will anyone else, how would I know if I wanna work for you? When I'm looking around on social media and you are a mess,

The Danger of Discounts [15:00]

Jen: Right.

Todd: everything on there is discounts and [00:26:00] in and buy one get one free. Or it's a mishmosh of, it's just a picture of a product, or it's just the back of a

Jen: It's confusing.

Todd: coke.

Jen: If you're, if what you're putting out there is confusing, then someone that's looking at is like, I don't even know where to start if I go in for an interview, right?

Todd: Correct. Then from there, you, you have to figure that stuff out, right? Who you are and you have to tell that story and that's your branding. From there, you have to understand who you want to work for

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: or with you or next to in a suite or whatever, and if you don't know, build an avatar. This is the person I would want there to 45 years old. are in a strong relationship. They have children or not. They have pets or not. live in this area or not. Well just figure those things out. They, they like to spend their free time doing these things, that is. They like to go to these places, whatever that is. This is how seriously [00:27:00] or not they take their education, right?

Because we see this. That's a big

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: wanna do education. the person you attracted.

Jen: Right. Did you ask the right questions?

Todd: hire them? Why did you hire them if they don't wanna do education? So, and you can say, everyone lied to me. Well, you gotta get a, a stronger BS

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: It's on you. is all on you. And so anyways, back to attracting the right employees or or whatever. You have to understand what they're looking for, who they are, what they want, and that's where the magic lies, because then you can offer those things weird.

Huh? Sorry, I'm sounding like a, a D-bag here,

Jen: So, well, no, it, it's,

Todd: people, what you give people what they want, what's that saying? You can have what you want.

Jen: yeah.

Todd: That's really what it is. As an employer, you have to deliver to your staff, not the other way around. And, and there's the

Jen: Yeah, I agree. It is, it is. So I have two, well, probably [00:28:00] a bunch of things here, but, so when we opened Hello there, it was coming out of COVID and there was a, a big shift I feel like, in the industry of like wants and needs. Everything was changing and, and to me changing so fast that. I had

said to Todd, I don't know if I can run a business in today's hair world.

It just, everything had changed so much, it was foreign to me and we had started. So I'm giving you what we did so that you can understand maybe what you could do. Um, we obviously had to build the team, so we're just talking to people out of school. And at the time I think there were four schools in the area, so I wanted to talk to students that were coming out of all four schools and a lot of them to understand.

What the schools were growing for Hair Pros, um, what they were coming out of with their strengths, their weaknesses, and each school was different for that. And then what was their vision for their future and what these. Students were coming out with were, were certain things that I, in a business that I had never run.

So I remember saying to Todd, honestly, like, I don't [00:29:00] know if I can run a staff in today's world. I'm not sure I can be this uncomfortable. I don't know if I'm, I'm able to pivot and innovate with what their needs are and what that looks like to run and, and still have a healthy business that can be successful.

Right. Because we wanna meet their needs.

Todd: for one

Jen: Yep.

Todd: I think that's super important because you're admitting that you didn't know how to do something. And I think as owners, we get caught up in having the answers on off the top of our heads far too often. And we chase that perfection that doesn't exist and it just is harmful. You have to be willing to admit the mistakes you're making, and I don't need you to build out a podcast and go tell the world.

We don't have a problem

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Go ahead, Jen.

Jen: Yeah. So there just was a, there was a wall like, can I change this much to meet whatever their needs are, but also come up with a business that has still systems in it, and what does this look like? And it would require me to. First of all, be a completely different owner, which I wanted to [00:30:00] be. Coming out of my last salon, I wanted to be completely different.

But wanting something and doing it are two extremely different things. So when I was in the middle of it, I was like, this is so freaking uncomfortable. I don't know if I can do, I. Everything I set out to do, I didn't realize how uncomfortable this would be. That makes me wanna throw up, right? Like, how do I do this?

Um, and I, I don't like to fail, right? I understand that there's so much to learn. When you fail, you should fall on your face. And I did. Um, and I learned from that and I came back from it. Um, but then kind of just as we like weaved through all these interviews was kind of started to see. The people we wanted to work with, the people that were buying into what we were doing and how we could give them the things they needed with systems in place and still run a business that had rules and, and things like that.

And it all just came together. Now, that wasn't easy, like I said. Um, but it, it required a lot of listening. And I prior was just a talker. I was not a listener. I was just like, [00:31:00] blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. This is what we do here. We're great, we're awesome. But I wasn't listening. What's that?

Todd: I can.

Jen: I wasn't listening to the needs and I wasn't, I wasn't pivoting and innovative and growing myself, um, as an owner and a leader.

So once I started doing that and we started really talking through it, it was like, okay, this is what these hair pros need. This is what the business needs, and this is how we can make this come together. It's gonna be different for everybody. But the interviewing process of everybody coming out of school helped us realize what that generation was looking for in a salon, and then we took the salon and how can we make it.

Work for us too, right? Because I wanna be in my salon working when I'm behind the chair and wanna be there. I've, when I owned my last salon, there were days I was like, I wanna quit the salon. I don't even like being here. So I didn't wanna come to that point again. Or if I did, I wanted to make sure we could pivot and innovate and create new things so that I was excited too.

Um, the other part is just being a leader, like you need to. Respect the people that work at your salon. I have taught in so [00:32:00] many salons and I hear these owners talk to their staff and it's rude and it's, they're talking down to them and it's just awful. So. You have to treat people how you wanna be treated.

And that's really, really important in that, in, in creating that culture. Um, and if you don't do that, if you don't listen to what you're saying, like if you're not talking well to people, but you're like, why are they not listening? Well, you're treating them like crap or you're treating them like children.

They are not. They are the next generation. They are professionals, even if they're not at the level of professional. You want, then you have to show them what that looks like. Um, they're just learning all the things and they're looking up to you to show them how to be the best version of themselves.

Todd: That was a lot,

Jen: That was a lot.

Todd: think I could comment on it. I think we should pick back up next

Jen: Okay. Sounds great. I.

Todd: I think that everything you said has value there. I think,, I, I could go on and on, so I think we'll pick this up next week [00:33:00] because there's just too much to go to, and this might even be a three part episode, to be

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: been trying to aim for that 30 to 40 minute mark. And yeah, so if you want more, get on our newsletter list,

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: on our email list. On Thursdays, I send out a weekly, or I send out a weekly newsletter every Thursday, and I reformatted it recently at the beginning of the year, maybe where it's a 3, 2, 1. So I give three business insights and I always include a try this. So it's just something to get you thinking and it's always things that we've done in our business. Again, we don't just pass out theory. Uh, and then I do two either quotes or stories that are related to the theme of the newsletter for that week.

And then the one is just a question or a challenge that I like to leave you guys with a reader. I. to get you thinking about things and, and ways to make little nudges and changes in your business that aren't gonna explode your head. [00:34:00] So if you're looking for that sort of stuff, get on that email list and you can find that in our Instagram profiles.

You could find that in the show notes to the podcast, and, uh, if not, you can reach out to me directly and I'll take care of, you can find me. Uh, email me if you want, Todd, at hello hair code.com. Happy to chat. We can set up a phone call if you need to, whatever. All right, we're here to help. Thanks everyone.

Jen: Have a great day. But if you're listening on a Monday, happy Monday, another day. Happy day.

Todd: that's when these episodes release on Monday. So I'm just in the habit of saying Happy Monday. Anyway, let's get to it. So Jen and I have been noticing a lot of salon owners and whoever, just things get shaken up and things get shaken up all the time. But I see a lot of people that are like, running a commission salon worth it? Everyone's going rental. I see that a lot. I also see I'm over renters. I wanna [00:35:00] work by myself a lot.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: I also see I'm over renting. I want to be back with commission so that I can be around a team again. I

Jen: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Todd: So today we're gonna talk about the things that we do in our commission salon, I hope it helps people out there. You have to understand that as a leader or a business owner, you have to operate the business and not just the hair. I guess, what, I'm gonna jump in with my opening

Jen: Okay.

Todd: really close to that, if you don't

Jen: No.

Todd: time for opening takes. I still need to

Jen: Yes, you do. Get on that.

Todd: for that. So today my opening take is that running a salon business isn't about scissors. It's not about your chair.

It's not about what blow dryer you use. It's about business. It's about understanding and building business. That is number one problem I think the [00:36:00] industry faces on our end. you want to talk about the product side of stuff and the brands and all that, there's a ton of BS there too. But for today, let's control what we can control and what we can control is our business. You have to, if you want a business, down the scissors, step away from the chair and build a

Jen: Mm-hmm. And run it.

Todd: And so we're gonna talk about exactly what we did to accomplish that today after Jen's take. Probably gonna, I'm probably just gonna record that and put like a

Jen: Okay. I like it. So my opening take is leadership. So. To what you said in the beginning, I, I see often just complaining. Like, does anyone, like, how are you even hiring people? How are you keeping people, everyone's leaving. I see a lot of blaming on the hair pros that are coming outta school. Let's say next generation hair pros.

Like they don't wanna work. They're lazy. Okay? So first of all, that's the next generation. So figure out how to inspire them. That would be leadership. [00:37:00] And if you're having all these problems rather than blame generation of. The next hair pros or anything else under the the roof. Of the business you're running, you gotta take a look in the mirror because it starts at the top.

So you are leading either a team, a business, whatever you're leading, it's on you to start there. And most often you are the problem of where it all began. So take a look in the mirror. Reevaluate. Probably change some stuff or read a few books on how to lead a team and how to inspire people, how to understand the next generation that's coming into the hair industry.

'cause if you understand them, you can figure out how to lead them. Don't just blame everything that you see that's not working. In my day, it was this, in my day it was that I've been doing hair for 25 years. I get it in my day. I did this. But that's not the team that we lead at. Hello? They need different things.

They don't need what I did. They're not me. And that's totally fine. I need, and Todd needs to understand how to lead this team in this generation in 2025 [00:38:00] and how to get them excited.

That's on us and we do a lot of work to do that. So check your leadership.

Todd: All right. Amen. So just roll into this. Everything is gonna start with your

Jen: I.

Todd: And what I mean by that is not this like, woo woo,, let's clear our minds. Let's do all this stuff. No, let's wrap your mind around. You're building a freaking business and that's what you need to do. I. You could be amazing at cutting hair, coloring, teaching, educating, whatever.

You could be a, a global platform artist. Is that the highest? What's the

Jen: I don't know. Sure.

Todd: what's the highest BS rank that we made up

Jen: I don't pay attention like on that side.

Todd: you could be the best at whatever you're doing and suck at running a business.

Jen: Uhhuh.

Todd: I'm not even sorry to say that. It's just facts. You could also be amazing at running a business and have no clue how to do hair. Sorry. It's true. There are people out there running better salons that don't even know how to do

Jen: Right.

Todd: and so you have to wrap your mind around that, first and foremost. [00:39:00] it's not gonna work because you're gonna do all the things that Jen is saying. You're gonna be like blaming other

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: which is counterproductive because

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: your fault. You own the

Jen: Right.

Todd: or you're going to be just completely shutting down. Which is gonna lead you to burnout. 'cause we, how many people do Jen that just bury their head in the sand and they're like, I'll just work as hard as I can. And eventually something magical will

Jen: Right. That's,

Todd: they're burnt out and they're like, I wanna leave the

Jen: that's a fantasy world that's not real.

Todd: Yeah. You, you, your, I guess I can say this, your ex-business partner used to just bury your head in the sand and pretend everything would be okay and things would stack up. And stack up and stack up. And

Jen: Correct.

Todd: Now you guys aren't business

Jen: Yeah, very true. I.

Marketing That Actually Works [22:00]

Todd: It's just not a good

Jen: I think when you don't know what to do, for some reason you're like, if I keep doing the same thing, but more of it things will change, right? Like something's gotta give, and the give is whoever's.

Todd: leaving.

Jen: Running the business to run it [00:40:00] better and, and try something new. Not do the same thing over and over and more of it.

If it's not working, it's not working. Like you have to reflect on that. Then you gotta figure out why it's not working and then what's the solution to fix that, to try something different that may or may not work also, but you've got to do something different.

Todd: Agreed, so. Yeah, that's another really, really important point is to try new stuff. So we, how many times do you see somebody going, what promotions work? We need to get people in, I need clients, what promotions work? And then they're running promotions and they're like 20% off, 40% off, 80% off. Buy one, get one

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Like I,

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: not a sustainable business model to give away your product when you need sales is not. Intelligent. It's not a good play. And it just shows me that people that do that don't understand business. If you aren't profitable, you can't afford to give away

Jen: Correct.

Todd: I don't. So you [00:41:00] are there way, are there workarounds and things like, can you have a distributor help you out with some product and do giveaways?

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: But what I'm seeing is people that are doing. Massive gift card promotions. Buy a \$50 gift card, get a \$50

Jen: You're not a corporation. No way. So, and I, on promotions, the only only thing I would say for me, I would cosign on a promotion is say you are phasing out a service or you're phasing out a product line and you're like, I need to move this product, or I want to use the rest of the bottle of this product for this service.

Cool. Promote it in a way that you're getting rid of it to open it up for something else That makes more sense to me. But the gift card one blows my mind. 'cause you're just. Losing money. And more often other ones where you're trying to build somebody but you're promoting with discounts, they're attracting a clientele that's not gonna stay.

And it's counterproductive, in my opinion.

Todd: Yeah, when you do discounts, and trust me, I learned from making these mistakes. I, I'm not perfect. I'm not the best business owner in the world. I've owned businesses now for the past, like what? We're [00:42:00] almost on 16 years or 15 and a half or whatever we're at

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: so I. I've learned from trial and error, and the reason I'm passionate about helping people is because I've made a lot of

Jen: Yeah, don't,

Todd: can help

Jen: right?

Todd: make those mistakes. So what happens when you run all these heavy discounts is you get these transient discount chasing coupon chasing people artificially inflate things in your business. And then guess what they do? They go to

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: when that salon runs a

Jen: Right.

Todd: because they're transient. chasing people.

There's nothing wrong with them. They're really nice people, but that's their thing. So now what do you have to do? You have to do more discounts to chase more people. And now you're in this spinning, this hamster wheel where you're offering 20% off constantly. So you're running at 80% of possibility, like 80% is the highest possible you could ever make. You're splitting, you're giving 50% of that to someone. You're paying taxes on all [00:43:00] that stuff you're negative, you're never gonna catch up

Jen: Yeah. If you're in the promotion business, meaning you're running a promotion, I would say you have to map out your whole entire year of what promotions are you running every month to keep getting in those people who are looking for deals. And if you're like, oh, that sounds awful, then you shouldn't run any promotions like that.

Like those discounts don't make sense to me, but I. If you're like, that's how you're building, then you should have a marketing strategy for your whole entire year of all of the ways that you're gonna keep doing that consistently so that you can keep those people coming in for whatever discounts you're giving out.

But then you also have to look at your numbers and are you actually even making money off of that? 'cause if you're not, then why are you doing it? Just to have people sitting in your chair and make it look like it's busy, even though you're losing money, that that doesn't make sense.

Todd: Right. So I want to touch on marketing 'cause I think it's a key component. But before that, I think it's important to start where we began with our foundations Jen and I huge into foundations. And what

does that mean? What does foundations, whatcha guys talking about? We're talking about your mission [00:44:00] statement, your vision statement, and your core principles or core values. And I'll explain them each real quick. If you're not sure. Mission statement is why you exist. Why does your business exist? Who do you serve? What do you do? Why do you do it? can people expect? It's important to have that laid out. And we had an exercise that we ran through several actually, to figure out our mission statement. Our vision statement, or a vision statement in general is where you'll be in the future. What do you want your business to be in the future and look like? What impact do you want to have on your community, on your industry, on your clientele, on your employees, that's your vision statement and your core values or principles, whatever you want to call them.

I kind of go back and forth on

Jen: I like values, but.

Todd: Yeah, so your core values are the things that are important to you, and these shouldn't be just things that you put on your wall because you're like. You know, you think that it's what you should have up there. Shouldn't [00:45:00] write the word luxury and be like, we're luxury because you think it's what a salon should be. Instead, it should be the values, the things that are important to you in your soul, the things that you will not stray from, I guess things that you are not willing to negotiate. And so for us, it was easy to put that list together and then we narrowed it down. That was the tough part. And then we operate our business from those values, period. So if something doesn't fit our core values, like Jen might come to me with something, she's like, I have this idea.

And I'm like, okay, how does it fit our core values? How does it support our mission? How does it land us on our vision? if it's, it doesn't. Then we don't make that move. it's not me saying no, it's because we're business partners and we're running a business. Now, if we just ran it from the side of doing hair, would have every product line. We would have a million different logos, we would have a million

Jen: Oh,

Todd: just

Jen: [00:46:00] chaos.

Todd: and things. Yeah, it would just be chaos. And now how many salons do that

Jen: Oh, so many. They give me a headache.

Todd: they don't have a baseline. If you don't have a starting point, if you don't have a long a jump point for your business, you really got nothing.

So you have you, the good news is it's your business, so you can go back now and do that

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: and you have a team already, will it upset them maybe. But that's the price that it costs to play.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: And you can work around that stuff too. If you're a strong enough leader, you can get people to buy in and if people don't buy in,

Jen: Find your new people.

Todd: Yeah. Find your new

Jen: I just wanna, on this point, this exercise was really, now remember I did own a salon before and we had a, a mission ish statement. I do remember going through the exercise, but it was kind of there just to basically like what Todd was saying, like put something out there. So we looked like a business, but we didn't ever refer to it or use it to drive the business.

So when we were coming up with the concept for Hello and we're running through all of these, different exercises [00:47:00] to get the, the mission, the core values the vision for the, the company. What I started to look at was now anything else that we aligned with. I now wanted to know what was that company's mission statement?

What do they stand for, what's their vision? And I'd never done that before. So more so I guess with different brands that we were bringing in. Like I wanted to understand the backstory of those brands.

Do they align not just from some of the stuff that Todd one I wanted was like simplicity and packaging and that kind of stuff.

But like, did they stand for things that worked for what we were doing and did it work for like what Hello was trying to create? And that even came into switching some behind. The scenes products we were using for different services that I realized weren't as clean or didn't stand up as well as I thought they had.

So it was very interesting as we were creating. For our business that I, now, when anything comes on our plate, it's, those are the things I look at first to make sure it's even worth bringing to the table to have a discussion. And I had never really looked at it that way. And I find it [00:48:00] very interesting. And as you look at other companies to, to learn about them and see what they stand for and make sure if you're bringing them in or you're endorsing them into your business, that it truly is something that works for what you guys are doing.

Todd: I couldn't agree more. What I'll add too is find yourself a distributor and a rep that understands your business and what you're doing. Because if you don't, their job is to sell products. They're gonna bring you a bunch of stuff that doesn't

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: align with you, but it's fun and it's new

Jen: And before it, you're just like, sure, why not?

Todd: And JLo or somebody endorsed it.

Jen: It must be cool.

Todd: must, you're gonna make a million dollars if you bring this in. here's the deal. We have an amazing distributor that they understand what we're doing. So if they bring us something, we don't have to go. Is this even worth looking

Jen: Right.

Todd: I mean, sometimes stuff might slip through.

Maybe they get excited, but the most part. They're, what, what we looked for was somebody that was very mission driven and they are very mission driven. They're very [00:49:00] family oriented, they're very pro taking care of their employees. They're very respectful of time, and so those are the things that we aligned with.

So chose them exclusively to work with Hello. that reason, it buys us peace of mind

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and we know we have the support, actual support. They are more of a boutique, I would

Jen: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Todd: They're not a massive integrated company, but they have the power to help us when we need

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: when we have questions and they offer a lot. They're always helping us out and helping other people in their network. So it's worth it to look around and find. Everything that aligns with your business, and those aren't things you would necessarily think about. Starting out, you're thinking about, how can I hire a stylist? How can I Im, how can I make them sell more retail? How can I get clients to stay? That's what you're thinking of. These are the [00:50:00] things that will drive that. These are the big, hard questions that you have to figure out as a business owner or as a leader. If you are not willing to do that, you shouldn't really have a business. And I'm sorry to say that 'cause it sounds like a jerk thing to say, but it's the truth. You're going to fail if you don't put the work in. And we don't wanna see people fail.

Jen: Right.

Todd: I think more people in the industry,, for a while you would see always this like no competition thing or whatever the hell it was. like competition. I, if you have competition, it pushes you to be

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: you to do.

Jen: that's how you innovate. That's how you get inspired.

Todd: It doesn't mean I want anyone to do bad. It doesn't mean

Jen: The word competition is a healthy word. I don't know why people make it sound like it's a bad word. It's really quite fantastic.

Todd: because they're afraid of it.

Jen: Yeah, I, I'm a competitive person, so it makes me so excited.

Todd: they think with a scarcity mindset, if someone else does, well, I do bad, but that's not how the

Jen: No, not even close.

Todd: [00:51:00] So rising tide lifts all ships. If there's a vibe in your community of just having great salons, why would that be bad for you? That means you're a great salon.

Jen: Celebrate.

Todd: Yeah. the people, everyone around you is

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Isn't that what you

Jen: Which means you'll just keep pushing to be better and better and better.

Todd: Yes. I want to touch on marketing. I think we brought that up and I don't remember exactly what you said about it, but you said something about marketing. Do you remember what you said?

Jen: Mm-hmm. Surprise, surprise.

Todd: so I, I wanted to come back to it after we talked about the, the mission and vision. Because your marketing needs to reflect those things, website should display your mission. should not just be a pretty logo and how to contact you. It needs to tell your

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: Your website needs to give the vibe of your salon [00:52:00] accurately.

Jen: So important and so often not what we see.

Todd: Yeah, exactly. How many times have you looked at someone's website and then gone to teach at their salon and

Jen: They're com

Final Thoughts [30:00]

Todd: doesn't look anything

Jen: Yeah,

Todd: that?

Jen: like website could be beautiful. And then I walk in there and it's like complete chaos and not clean and just, yeah, complete opposite. And it, if that's your vibe, then make sure your website is the same thing, so that not just me, I mean, I'm not coming in there just to talk about product.

But from a clientele perspective, you wanna make sure that that person isn't disappointed. You wanna wow them when they walk in. Your salon should be even better than what's displayed on your website.

Todd: I agree wholeheartedly with that. And so with marketing, you have. Have to understand yourself. So that's your mission, vision, core values, because you're telling those stories. Now, who are you telling them to? And keep in mind, these are all 100% things we've done at Hello that have worked. I'm not giving you anything that's theory.

I'm not giving you anything that we're guessing at. is 100% stuff that we've [00:53:00] done. And so the next step is who are you talking to? So you have to create an avatar. You have to understand, if you don't know what that means, I'll put some links in

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: the show notes. I've written blog posts about it, which is another part of your marketing. But you don't understand who you are and you don't understand who you're talking to, how are you marketing? You're not, you're just throwing dollars out to like boost

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That's not marketing,

Jen: no return on investment there, so you're wasting your money and you think you're probably doing something. You're like, oh, I'm getting out to people. You're not because you're lost and you, you don't have a clear vision of who, literally, you said, like what Todd said, who you're marketing to, who are you targeting?

Todd: I've had people that I've worked with in the past, Jen, that are, that have said,, I boosted this post and it got 1200 likes. And I said, great. How many dollars did you make off of that? And they were like, huh?

Jen: That's where I think people get really confused with the,

Todd: hold on, hold on

Jen: yeah.

Todd: The second part of it is go through those likes. 75% of 'em are your friends from hair school that does nothing for you. You're [00:54:00] not talking to them. They already know you do hair. Why are you marketing to people that already know you exist? Go ahead. Sorry.

Jen: I think that's a actually great point. What I was gonna like, just the likes part. I think there's this social media. Buzz inside of people that are like, I, like you just said, I got 1200 likes. Like, oh my God, that's so amazing. So you feel really great, but how much money did you pay to boost the post? So you need to make Mac at least that.

Plus you should be making a ton more on top of it so that it's worth it to boost these posts, those likes, if they don't bring in any dollars. Are useless. So great. You got a confidence boost, but the marketing is supposed to make you money, not just make you feel great. So like what you said, then you get all these likes, and if more majority of them are either bots or your friends and they're not coming in to sit in your chair, then that's not working for you and that's not marketing.

Keep doing it If you feel good, but you should be making money off your marketing strategies.

Todd: A [00:55:00] lot of times too, I've heard this, I'm not in this for the money. This is my passion. You guys talk about money a lot. I've heard people say that too. You know, Todd and Jen talk about money a lot. I've heard that through the grapevine. Yeah. You know why? money solves problems.

Jen: keeps your business open.

Todd: ' cause if you want to take care of your employees so they stay, you need money to do that.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: you wanna surprise and delight your clients by giving away free services or by just surpri, by saying, what, today your blow dries on me. You're a great client and I love you when I see you in my chair. Today's on me. If you wanna be able to do that stuff right and not just discount to try to get clients in, need money to do that. You have to cover that, that cost there, especially if you have somebody else, like take care of people's services sometimes that whatever, we just decide that we're taking care of the service. I still have to pay the service provider,

Jen: That takes money.

Todd: have to have the [00:56:00] money beforehand to do that because we want to be in a position to give back to

Jen: Yeah. And we wanna be open year after year after year so that we can keep doing these things and have a salon for people to work at that want to be in a great environment that takes money.

Todd: talk,

Jen: I.

Todd: know, about the economy. 'cause everyone online's an economist and they talk about inflation because everyone understands what that actually means. And the thing is you have to build that stuff in. So you have to make more money every

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: If you look at our business we've made, except for when, so when we opened, it was COVID.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: That whole thing screwed everything up. So we went from zero to,, I forget what the numbers are, but it was like thousands of percents better. And then we had a little bit of a dip because things

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: So if you take, if you take that out, have beaten every month, every year since then. And that's what you have to do to keep up with inflation, to keep up with things, is you have to [00:57:00] continually increase your sales. Continually chase that bottom line. you have the top line where all the money comes into your business, it goes out, right? You need to pay your electricity, your rent, your water, your supplies, your loans, your whatever, your employees, your taxes, and then you have the bottom line, and it's all the dollars that you could save for yourself. And then guess what? you can decide what to do with. Those are yours. You can give those away. You can't give away money before you

Jen: Right.

Todd: So you gotta flip your thinking there. Let's get a little, so I've, I've decided halfway through this that this was gonna be a two part episode. It just needs to be, it needs to be. So where do you wanna go next with things that we've done at Hello, we've talked about our foundations. We've talked about marketing, we've talked about money a little bit. [00:58:00] Culture?

Jen: Sure that goes into that leadership that I started with, so I like that we can finish up with that.

Todd: yeah, I think, I don't think we're gonna finish on that. I think we're gonna probably talk a little bit about it and then we'll pick back up with culture next week because it's just a huge thing. So where do you want to even start? I think. I asked you where you wanna start, and then I had an

Jen: Go ahead. That was great. I paused too. I'm proud of myself.

Todd: I just think it all goes back to your mindset and knowing who you are and your foundations. If you, I see this problem all the time where people are like, I can't find renters, I can't find commission stylists. I can't find anyone to fill my suites. Are there any other options out there I'm not aware of?

Jen: No, that's, I think that's pretty much it.

Todd: Here's the thing, if you don't know who you are, how will anyone else, how would I know if I wanna work for you? When I'm looking around on social media and you are a mess,

Jen: Right.

Todd: everything on there is discounts and in and buy one get one free. Or it's a mishmash of, it's just a picture of a product, [00:59:00] or it's just the back of a

Jen: It's confusing.

Todd: coke.

Jen: If you're, if what you're putting out there is confusing, then someone that's looking at is like, I don't even know where to start if I go in for an interview, right?

Todd: Correct. Then from there, you, you have to figure that stuff out, right? Who you are and you have to tell that story and that's your branding. From there, you have to understand who you want to work for

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: or with you or next to in a suite or whatever, and if you don't know, build an avatar. This is the person I would want there to 45 years old. are in a strong relationship. They have children or not. They have pets or not. live in this area or not. Well just figure those things out. They, they like to spend their free time doing these things, that is. They like to go to these places, whatever that is. This is how seriously or not they take their education, right?

Because we see this. That's a big

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: wanna do education. the person you attracted.

Jen: [01:00:00] Right. Did you ask the right questions?

Todd: hire them? Why did you hire them if they don't wanna do education? So, and you can say, everyone lied to me. Well, you gotta get a, a stronger BS

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: It's on you. is all on you. And so anyways, back to attracting the right employees or or whatever. You have to understand what they're looking for, who they are, what they want, and that's where the magic lies, because then you can offer those things weird.

Huh? Sorry, I'm sounding like a, D-bag here,

Jen: So, well, no, it, it's,

Todd: people, what you give people what they want, what's that saying? You can have what you want.

Jen: yeah.

Todd: That's really what it is. As an employer, you have to deliver to your staff, not the other way around. And, and there's the

Jen: Yeah, I agree. It is, it is. So I have two, well, probably a bunch of things here, but, so when we opened Hello there, it was coming out of COVID and there was a, a big shift I feel like, in the industry of like [01:01:00] wants and needs. Everything was changing and, and to me changing so fast that. I had said to Todd, I don't know if I can run a business in today's hair world.

It just, everything had changed so much, it was foreign to me and we had started. So I'm giving you what we did so that you can understand maybe what you could do. We obviously had to build the team, so we're just talking to people out of school. And at the time I think there were four schools in the area, so I wanted to talk to students that were coming out of all four schools and a lot of them to understand. What the schools were growing for Hair Pros what they were coming out of with their strengths, their weaknesses, and each school was different for that. And then what was their vision for their future and what these. Students were coming out with were, were certain things that I, in a business that I had never run.

So I remember saying to Todd, honestly, like, I don't know if I can run a staff in today's world. I'm not sure I can be this uncomfortable. I don't know if I'm, I'm able to pivot [01:02:00] and innovate with what their needs are and what that looks like to run and, and still have a healthy business that can be successful.

Right. Because we wanna meet their needs.

Todd: for one

Jen: Yep.

Todd: I think that's super important because you're admitting that you didn't know how to do something. And I think as owners, we get caught up in having the answers on off the top of our heads far too often. And we chase that perfection that doesn't exist and it just is harmful. You have to be willing to admit the mistakes you're making, and I don't need you to build out a podcast and go tell the world.

We don't have a problem

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: Go ahead, Jen.

Jen: Yeah. So there just was a, there was a wall like, can I change this much to meet whatever their needs are, but also come up with a business that has still systems in it, and what does this look like? And it would require me to. First of all, be a completely different owner, which I wanted to be. Coming out of my last salon, I wanted to be completely different.

But wanting something and doing it are two extremely different things. So when I was in the middle of it, I was like, this is so [01:03:00] freaking uncomfortable. I don't know if I can do, I. Everything I set out to

do, I didn't realize how uncomfortable this would be. That makes me wanna throw up, right? Like, how do I do this?

And I, I don't like to fail, right? I understand that there's so much to learn. When you fail, you should fall on your face. And I did. And I learned from that and I came back from it. But then kind of just as we like weaved through all these interviews was kind of started to see. The people we wanted to work with, the people that were buying into what we were doing and how we could give them the things they needed with systems in place and still run a business that had rules and, and things like that.

And it all just came together. Now, that wasn't easy, like I said. But it, it required a lot of listening. And I prior was just a talker. I was not a listener. I was just like, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. This is what we do here. We're great, we're awesome. But I wasn't listening. What's that?

Todd: I can.

Jen: I wasn't listening to the needs and I wasn't, I wasn't pivoting and innovative and [01:04:00] growing myself as an owner and a leader.

So once I started doing that and we started really talking through it, it was like, okay, this is what these hair pros need. This is what the business needs, and this is how we can make this come together. It's gonna be different for everybody. But the interviewing process of everybody coming out of school helped us realize what that generation was looking for in a salon, and then we took the salon and how can we make it.

Work for us too, right? Because I wanna be in my salon working when I'm behind the chair and wanna be there. I've, when I owned my last salon, there were days I was like, I wanna quit the salon. I don't even like being here. So I didn't wanna come to that point again. Or if I did, I wanted to make sure we could pivot and innovate and create new things so that I was excited too.

The other part is just being a leader, like you need to. Respect the people that work at your salon. I have taught in so many salons and I hear these owners talk to their staff and it's rude and it's, they're talking down to them and it's just awful. So. You have to treat people how [01:05:00] you wanna be treated.

And that's really, really important in that, in, in creating that culture. And if you don't do that, if you don't listen to what you're saying, like if you're not talking well to people, but you're like, why are they not listening? Well, you're treating them like crap or you're treating them like children.

They are not. They are the next generation. They are professionals, even if they're not at the level of professional. You want, then you have to show them what that looks like. They're just learning all the things and they're looking up to you to show them how to be the best version of themselves.

Todd: That was a lot,

Jen: That was a lot.

Todd: think I could comment on it. I think we should pick back up next

Jen: Okay. Sounds great. I.

Todd: I think that everything you said has value there. I think,, I, I could go on and on, so I think we'll pick this up next week because there's just too much to go to, and this might even be a three part episode, to be

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: been trying to aim for that 30 to 40 minute mark. And yeah, so if you want more, get on our newsletter list,

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: on our email [01:06:00] list. I send out a weekly newsletter every Thursday, and I reformatted it recently at the beginning of the year, maybe where it's a 3, 2, 1. So I give three business insights and I always include a try this. So it's just something to get you thinking and it's always things that we've done in our business. Again, we don't just pass out theory. And then I do two either quotes or stories that are related to the theme of the newsletter for that week.

And then the one is just a question or a challenge that I like to leave you guys with a reader. I. to get you thinking about things and, and ways to make little nudges and changes in your business that aren't gonna explode your head. So if you're looking for that sort of stuff, get on that email list and you can find that in our Instagram profiles.

You could find that in the show notes to the podcast, and if not, you can reach out to me directly and I'll take care of, you email me if you want, Todd, at hello@haircode.com. Happy to chat. We can set up a phone call if you need to, whatever. All right, we're here to help. Thanks [01:07:00] everyone.